Leicester, Mass
Dec. 31. 1866.

Dear Mr. Garrison,

76 This will be one of the very last letters I shall write in 1866. It gives me pleasure to acknowledge, hereby, yours, so kind & thoughtful, of yesterday, and I accept, as we all do, most gladly, your earnest good wishes for the coming year, for us all; and most heartily do we, in turn, send to you, to your dear wife, to all under your roof, and to the beloved children, (now somewhat scattered, yet all so true, upright, faithful, & affectionate,) our heartiest wishes for a Happy New Year, a year of increasing health & happiness, a year of great peace & satisfaction, in that we may see the cause of Justice, Truth, & Freedom perfectly triumphing and conquering all its foes. —

We are very sorry to hear from yourself — what Mrs. Thaxter had told me last week, — that you have been lately suffering with new severity from your injured arm. I cannot but now urge you

to have a thorough examination of it made by the most skilful anatomist and Surgeon who can be found in Boston or vicinity. It seems wholly wrong that it should continue in this suffering state so long. Let the most competent person be summoned to do his very best to ascertain the precise seat & condition of the disorder and apply the appropriate remedy, if he knows it. I think your old friend Dr. Henry W. Williams would tell you, perhaps as correctly as any other man, to whom, in Boston or neighborhood, you had best apply. You ought not to continue in this suffering state, if possible to prevent it; and we right to have you yet in vigorous old age for 20 years to serve the great cause and help save our Country. I know that many are looking & longing earnestly for your renewed, and steady, and strong word, in these critical times. I think Congress behaved very shamefully in breaking up, and going off for a fortnight, at so important a time as

this, especially when the entire lesson is so short a one.

There are many topics, public & one, personal & one, on which I greatly want to talk with you. Both of my last visits to the city were made with intent to go to Roxbury and see you. The first, which was from Dec. 11th to 15th was very much occupied, and I was not able to move about as usual, owing to a sort of neuralgic affection of my left ankle & foot, which has continued to trouble me to the present time. The week following I was confined at home, — to the bed 2 days, — by a pretty severe general cold. I was again in Boston last week, again prevented from much locomotion by the neuralgia aforesaid (if it be that) which is at no time severe, yet enough to make walking troublesome at times; and so felt obliged to give up going to Roxbury. I think when I am next in Boston I will drop you a line, & propose to go (if you are feeling well enough for it) to come in & see me.

I do not wonder that you feel like demurring (!) a little at the delays in the "Testimonial." They are very trying, certainly. But I beg you, if possible, to ignore them just as far as you can. The Committee do not mean to give up the effort at present. It would be a perfectly easy thing to get the entire amount proposed – it would all have been raised before this date, as was expected – if those persons who have expressed a warm interest in the Object and promised to help it ~~[illegible]~~ had kept or would even now keep, those promises; as I haven't a doubt they yet mean to do, & most of them will do. So we must have patience – (though I confess it is hard for me to have patience with them sometimes!) But it is a vastly busy country, and all our live men have their hands very full. That was the whole cause of what Wendell calls the "stick" in New York. Returning from Philadelphia the latter part of November, I revived the subject in New York, and left it in what I deemed a good train. The Object has some most warm & excellent friends in that city, and Dr. Bellows has from the first been ready to act, and has, to the best of my knowledge, done all that he engaged to do. He told us, in Boston, in August, that he could not act as Chairman of the Committee there

But his pen and his influence have been freely given, and his co-operation, I know, was ready, any time after October 1st. But circumstances were unfortunate - An important letter of his got mislaid - the elections came on, and New Yorkers were absorbed, first in the National, & next in their City, elections; and so nothing was done. At last, however, their Committee was got, & they supposed they had secured a fitting agent; and I was inwardly rejoicing; - when, lo, that Committee sent me a letter, summoning me to New York, to take charge of the whole subject there. They had this reason for doing it; that, when I was there, I said (in reply to a remark that I had better take charge of the collection there,) that this was entirely opposite to Dr Bellows' opinion and advice in the case, opposite to my own conviction of the best way of doing the work in New York city, and that I had enough to do elsewhere; - nevertheless, if they found themselves in a strait, in which they might suppose I could be of any service

to them, I should not refuse to do anything that lay in my power. Being disappointed, it seems, in securing the aid of the gentleman they had expected, they accordingly sent to me. — The letter came to me when I was confined to the house (as I have mentioned) and when my lameness made locomotion difficult, and going to New York for active work there entirely impossible. And so I wrote them, — with quite a heavy spirit, for I feared, from the tone of their letter, that the sending for me was a <u>dernier resort.</u> On returning here from Boston, on Saturday last, however, I was greatly cheered at finding a note, — I will enclose it that you may see. How much relieved I must have been by it, — as I was. So I trust all things will go smoothly in New York.

— You know that in July last we "toured", moved thereto by the warm recommendation of Mr. Willard, and by your

Own concurring judgment & wish, sent Mr. Wm. R. Hooper of Washington to the principal Western cities. He visited them, in the discharge of the duty he had undertaken, & reported to us favorably on the prospects of the Testimonial in every one, save St. Louis, where they felt that the friends of Freedom had already all the responsibility of a pecuniary nature they could carry. All others gave cordial promise of co-operation, meaning to take up the work, they said, in the early autumn. Up to the 1st of December, I had not received one letter nor one dollar from the whole region visited by Mr. Hooper; (previously to his going I had received a number of contributions, & one or two subsequently, from small & remote places, which had heard nothing of his agency.) Mr. H. was extremely surprised when (on the 1st Dec.) he learned of this. He undertook to write, at once, to the several places & persons he had seen. From Rochester, N.Y. I have just had returns; but the work was commenced there, before Mr. Hooper went,

by that true & noble woman, Mrs. Mary B. E. Curtis. Done the best she could, the work has lengthened out to this time, — so I am the less discouraged at the backwardness of other places. — I therefore thank you truly for all your sympathy; be assured I am endeavoring, on the one hand, not to crowd this thing, nor to urge it unduly, never importunately, always, courteously, to present it as a national duty and a personal privilege, — and, on the other, to adapt it to my strength, & my strength to it. I will only add that those of the Committee, who are most familiar with my method of working, and of the progress of the work itself, express their most cordial approval, and think I have met with a decided success, — more ready, to think so, than I am myself.

To-day comes a most cheering list of about 25 English names - Members of Parliament and others — John Stuart Mill, John Bright, & Wm. E. Forster among them. You shall soon see it. It is grand. We shall soon publicly announce these names. The Committee are generally agreed that the American subscriptions, as far as received, ought to be published very soon.

With affectionate regard, Yrs. &c.

Sam. May Jr.